

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

On page 2 of the first Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, and 5-11 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Mullis 5,787,618 in view of Singerman 1,880,026. The Examiner states that Mullis has all of the features of the present invention, as it is disclosed in claim 1, except an openable front panel, which is provided by Singerman. To overcome this rejection, the applicant has amended his claim 1 to include additional language relating to position of its reflective surfaces so that in addition to routine viewing of the infinity display effect from the front, additional reflective surfaces are positioned so that the infinity display effect is enhanced and can also be viewed from the top, sides, back, or combination thereof. Further, since the Examiner has stated that the original claim 4 was patentable as an independent claim as long as it included the subject matter of its base claim, and the original claim 4 incorporated viewing of the infinity display effect through the front and sides of a wall-mounted housing, as well as 360 degree viewing of the infinity display effect in table-mounted housings, and further since top viewing of the infinity display effect is supported in the original specification for both types of housings, the applicant believes that the language added to claim 1 via amendment herein does provide a patentable distinction over Mullis and Singerman. Therefore, since the combination of Mullis and Singerman does not teach the present invention as now disclosed in amended claim 1, the applicant herein requests that the Examiner review the applicant's newly amended claims and withdraw the previous rejections to them found on pages 2 and 3 of the first Office Action. One typographical error relating to 'mirrors' was found in claim 1 and corrected by substituting the word 'reflective surfaces'.

Other changes to the applicant's claims are minimal and have been made to claims 3, 5, and 13 to add partially reflective top surfaces in the cover and stationary base member ~~that are~~ used for top viewing of an infinity display effect. Support for adding such language ~~to these~~ three claims is found in the originally filed specification on page 17, line 4, and the variations to the eleventh embodiment discussed on page 30, starting on line 14.

The applicant provides a concluding statement in the Remarks section below. Also, the applicant believes that his amended claims do not contain new matter. A complete listing of claims follows, showing the current status of each claim, with additions underlined and language to be cancelled having strike-through markings.

COMPLETE LISTING OF CLAIMS - showing the current status of each claim, with additions underlined and language to be cancelled having strike-through markings:

1. (Currently amended) An infinity mirror display apparatus for enhanced display of objects which allows easy and rapid exchange of one display object for another without having to dismantle said apparatus, disturb said apparatus from a mounted position, disturb other objects already positioned within said apparatus for display, or permanently alter objects to secure them for display, said infinity mirror display apparatus comprising:

a housing having a stationary base member and a cover which together define an enclosed interior space, said cover being easily movable between a closed position against said stationary base member and a variety of opened positions wherein rapid access to said interior space is provided;

at least two opposed at least partially reflective surfaces positioned adjacent to said interior space with two of said reflective surfaces being in opposed positions and at a spaced-apart distance from one another, with one of said reflective surfaces in opposed positions being partially reflective and positioned to provide front viewing of an infinity display effect, and the remaining ones of said reflective surfaces positioned to provide infinity display effect viewing selected from a group consisting of side viewing, back viewing, and top viewing;

a plurality of display objects adapted for positioning within said interior space, selected ones of said display objects being positioned between said ~~mirrors~~ two opposed partially reflective surfaces;

at least one light source communicating with said interior space and adapted for adequate illumination of each said selected display object for creation of multiple closely spaced-apart

reflected images thereof to make an infinity mirror effect; and

electrical connection means adapted for connecting each said light source to a source of power so that when electrical power is provided to each said light source, viewing of each said display object is enhanced by said infinity mirror effect to observers looking at said display object through each said partially reflective surface.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a control means adapted for interrupting electrical power connection to each said light source.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said cover is selected from a group consisting of totally detachable covers, partially detachable covers, substantially planar covers, covers having more than one planar surface, covers having a top surface and four sides, covers having a partially reflective top surface, top opening covers, and covers with handles adapted for ease in cover manipulation between said open position and said closed position.

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said stationary base member has a plurality of side surfaces, and said housings are selected from a group consisting of wall-mounted housings adapted for enhanced viewing of each said display object positioned therein with an infinity mirror effect viewed through said cover and said side surfaces, and table-mounted housings wherein a full 360° viewing of the infinity mirror effect is accomplished through said cover.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said stationary base member is selected from a group consisting of box-like stationary base members, ~~and~~ platform-like stationary base members, and stationary base members having a partially reflective top surface.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising fastening means adapted for

securing said cover against said stationary member when said cover is in said closed position.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said fastening means is selected from a group consisting of magnetic closure means, keyed locking means, and snap-fit types of closure means.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising at least one display object support device positioned within said interior space, said support device adapted for quick exchange of each said display object to and from said interior space, said support device also being adapted for support of at least one of said display objects without permanent alteration thereto.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein each said display object support device is selected from a group consisting of transparent lower supports, translucent lower supports, opaque lower supports having at least one aperture therethrough, supports attachable to glass through suction cup means, means for suspending display objects within said interior space, and support means comprising interlocking protrusions and peg holes.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein each said light source is selected from a group consisting of incandescent bulbs, multiple miniature incandescent light bulbs encased within elongated flexible plastic tubing, neon lights, light emitting diode lighting, electroluminescent lights, lights positioned within said housing to shine upward on a display object, lights positioned within said housing to shine downward on a display object, and lights positioned within said housing to shine laterally toward a display object.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said stationary base member has opposed grooves therein adjacent to said interior space and said cover has opposed perimeter

edges, and wherein said opposed perimeter edges of said cover are slidably positioned within said grooves for movement between said closed position and said opened positions.

12. (Original) A method of making an infinity mirror display apparatus providing easy access to the interior thereof for rapid exchange of display objects positioned therein without having to dislodge said apparatus from its mounted position, without having to dismantle said apparatus, without disturbing other display objects within said apparatus, and without requiring permanent alteration or modification of the display objects to securely position them within said apparatus, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a housing having an interior spaced defined by a stationary base member and an easily separable cover, at least one totally reflective surface, a plurality of partially reflective surfaces, a plurality of display objects adapted for positioning independently or in combination with one another within said interior space, at least one light source, electrical connection means, and a power source;

attaching a first one of said partially reflective surfaces to said cover in a position where said partially reflective surface is adjacent to said interior space and also so that an illuminated object positioned behind said partially reflective surface can be viewed by an observer looking through said partially reflective surface;

positioning a remaining one of said reflective surfaces adjacent to said interior space so that a reflected image from an illuminated object positioned behind said partially reflective surface can be viewed by an observer looking through said partially reflective surface;

positioning selected ones of said display objects within said interior space and between the ones of said reflective positioned adjacent said interior space;

positioning each said light source for communication with said interior space in a position remote from each said partially reflective surface used and also in a position to provide sufficient illumination for at least one of said display objects so that multiple reflected images of all of said display objects selected for positioning within said interior space can be seen through said partially reflective surfaces;

optionally forming an opening within said stationary base member and said cover for extension therethrough of said electrical connection means; and

using said electrical connection means to connect each said light source to said power source so that when each said light source is activated, each of said selected display objects viewed through one of said partially reflective surfaces positioned adjacent to said interior space is enhanced by said multiple reflected images creating an infinity mirror effect.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 12 wherein said stationary base members and complementing ones of said covers are selected from a group consisting of box-like stationary base members and substantially planar covers; substantially planar platform-like stationary base members and box-like covers; top opening covers; covers having two adjoined panels and a complementary stationary base member having top, bottom, and back surfaces; covers having three adjoined panels and a complementary stationary base member having top, bottom, and back surfaces; and stationary base members and a complementary cover each having an angled three dimensional configuration complementing the other to form an interior space, covers having a partially reflective top surface, and stationary base members having a partially reflective top surface.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising the providing of a means of

closure between said stationary base member and said wherein said means of closure is selected from a group consisting of hinges, easily releasable closure means, promptly releasable closure means, snap-fit types of closure means, magnets, and locking closure means.

15. (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising display object support means and wherein said display object support means are selected from a group consisting of display supports having a transparent upper surface, display supports having a translucent upper surface, movable display support members, movable display support members secured in place by at least one suction cup, movable display support members secured in place by adhesive means, and movable display support members secured in place by bonding agent means.

16. (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising the steps of providing a plurality of vertically extending spaced-apart peg holes and providing a plurality of elevated support members each having at least one protrusion thereon configured for engaging one of said peg holes.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein said step of providing a plurality of vertically extending spaced-apart peg holes is achieved through steps in a group consisting of the step of providing of a plurality of mounting strips having peg holes, connecting selected ones of said mounting strips in a vertical orientation to said stationary base member so that each of said mounting strips so mounted is positioned within said interior space, connecting selected ones of said mounting strips in a vertical orientation to said cover so that each of said mounting strips so mounted is positioned within said interior space, forming a plurality of peg holes which are spaced apart from one another directly within said stationary base member so that a device mating with any of said peg holes becomes positioned within said interior space, and forming a

plurality of peg holes which are uniformly spaced apart from one another directly within said stationary base member so that a device mating with any of said peg holes becomes positioned within said interior space.

18. (Original) The method of claim 12 further comprising the steps of providing of a plurality of anchoring devices, providing a quantity of filamentous material, attaching a selected number of said anchoring devices to said stationary base member, securing at least a portion of said filamentous material to at least one of said display objects to create suspendable display objects, and rapidly connecting said filamentous material to at least one of said anchoring devices so as to freely hang each said suspendable display object within said interior space.

19. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said light source is selected from a group consisting of individual incandescent bulbs, incandescent miniature lights housed within a flexible plastic tubing, light emitting diodes, electroluminescent lights, and neon lighting.

20. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein said stationary base member has opposed grooves therein adjacent to said interior space and said cover has opposed perimeter edges, and wherein said opposed perimeter edges of said cover are slidably positioned within said grooves for movement between said closed position and said opened positions.